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Message Text

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44
ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 SAJ-01 AID-20 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01

PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 OMB-01 CIEP-03 DRC-01 /141 W
---------- 111356
R 230955Z SEP 74
FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7789
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY SAIGON
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
USSAG
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L PHNOM PENH 12726

E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT CB
SUBJECT: LON NON RETURNS

REF: A. PHNOM PENH 12580 (NOTAL)
B. PARIS 22135 (NOTAL)

1. BRIGADIER GENERAL LON NON RETURNED TO PHNOM PENH SEPTEMBER 21 PER SCHEDULE GIVEN REFTEL B. ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, HE WAS MET BY AN ASSEMBLAGE OF CIVILIAN AND MILITARY PERSONALITIES, MANY OF THEM MEMBERS OF HIS OWN ENTOURAGE, AND WAS DRIVEN QUICKLY INTO TOWN.

2. THE RETURN OF THE CONTROVERSIAL "LITTLE BROTHER" PREDICTABLY HAS BECOME A PRIME TOPIC FOR GOSSIP AND SPECULATION IN PHNOM PENH. THERE HAS ALSO COMMENCED WHAT APPEARS TO BE A CONCERTED PRESS COMPAIGN ON HIS BEHALF ALONG THE LINES OF THE ARTICLE DESCRIBED IN REFTEL A, I.E., THE ECONOMY IS TOTTERING, CORRUPTION IS RAMPANT, THE LITTLE PEOPLE ARE SUFFERING, LON NON HAS THE FORCE AND ABILITY
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TO RESOLVE THESE PROBLEMS, AND HAS RETURNED TO DO SO.

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3. AS DEPARTMENT IS AWARE, LON NON IS BACK DESPITE
THE AMBASSADOR'S PREVIOUS REPRESENTATIONS TO THE MARSHAL
THAT HIS PRESENCE THERE AT THIS TIME WOULD NOT BE HELPFUL.
WE ARE INCLINED TO BELIEVE THAT LON NOL DID MAKE EFFORTS
TO PERSUADE HIS HEADSTRONG BROTHER NOT TO RETURN, THOUGH
IT IS DIFFICULIT TO SAY HOW STRONG SUCH EFFORTS MAY HAVE
BEEN. HIS RETURN IS NOT PROPITIOUS TO SAY THE LEAST,
SINCE HIS PENCHANG TO POLITICAL MISCHIEF - MAKING IS
CONSIDERABLE AND HAS LONG HISTORY.

4. LON NON WASTED NO TIME IN TRYING TO MAKE CONTACT WITH
THE EMBASSY, WITH NO ENCOURAGEMENT FROM US. HE CONTACTED
AARMA WHO WAS HIS ESCORT OFFICER IN THE US AND THROUGH
HIM REQUESTED A MEETING WITH THE AMBASSADOR. LATTER WILL
NOT SEE HIM, BUT IN ORDER NOT TO ANTAGONIZE LON NON UN-
DULY, DCM WILL MEET WITH HIM LATER IN WEEK. LON NON
CAN BE COUNTED ON TO TRY TO CLOTHE HIMSELF WITH APPARENT
AMERICAN BLESSING AND SUPPORT, AN EFFORT WHICH WE WILL
DO OUR UTMOST TO COUNTER.
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